

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EA/ANP:JFKNOWLES:RLW

APPROVED BY EA/ANP:JFKNOWLES

EA:JOZURHELLEN (IN DRAFT)

----- 015564

R 031634Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 103978

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AS, PFOR

SUBJECT: FORMER AUSTRALIAN OPPOSITION LEADER'S VIEWS

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. IN MAY 1 MEETING WITH EA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ZURHELLEN, FORMER LEADER OF OPPOSITION BILLY SNEDDEN EXPRESSED UNCERTAINTY AS TO ROLE AUSTRALIA SHOULD PLAY, ESPECIALLY IN SEA, IN LIGHT OF RECENT EVENTS IN VIET-NAM. ALSO SAID NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, EXCLUDING AUSTRALIA, NEEDED REASSURANCE OF UNITED STATES WILL TO MAKE DECISIONS. SNEDDEN STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF MANIFESTATIONS OF CONTINUED US PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN AND ASIA. OTHERWISE CHINA COULD FEEL SOVIET THREAT QUITE DIRECTLY AND BE STIMULATED
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TO STRENGTHEN ITS POSITION BY ENCOURAGING FURTHER INSUR-

GENCIES IN SEA. SNEDDEN VOICED STANDARD OPPOSITION
CRITICISM OF WHITLAM GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON DIEGO GARCIA
AND INDIAN OCEAN NUCLEAR FREE ZONE OF PEACE AND DESIRE FOR
OBSERVER STATUS AT CONFERENCE OF NONALIGNED COUNTRIES.
SAID AUSTRALIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES HAD TO HAVE CONFIDENCE
IN US, AND HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE AUSTRALIAN STATEMENTS AND

ATTITUDES SUPPORTIVE OF UNITED STATES. HE HOPED THAT
WHEN THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OPPOSITION PARTIES
AND LABOR GOVERNMENT ON FOREIGN POLICY, WE WOULD AVOID
GIVING ANY IMPRESSION TO AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC THAT USG WAS
SATISFIED WITH WHITLAM GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND CONSIDERED
US RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA BETTER THAN UNDER PREVIOUS
LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY GOVERNMENT.

2. ZURHELLEN TOLD SNEDDEN THAT AUSTRALIA'S ROLE IN FUTURE
WILL BE OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE TO SEA AND SOUTHWEST
PACIFIC COUNTRIES, WHICH NEED A STRONG, FRIENDLY AND
HELPFUL AUSTRALIA AT THEIR BACK. SOME TIME WILL BE
REQUIRED TO GET OVER SHOCK OF VIET-NAM, AND AUSTRALIA
CAN HELP BY JOINING US IN REASSURING OTHERS. WE ARE
DETERMINED TO STAY IN WESTERN PACIFIC AND OUR CONTINUED
PRESENCE THERE WILL DEMONSTRATE THE TRUTH OF THIS ASSUR-
ANCE. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE OUR PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN
OCEAN AS WELL, AND TO SEND SHIPS IN FROM TIME TO TIME AS
WE HAVE DONE IN THE PAST. QUITE APART FROM THE PROBLEM
OF THE SOVIET NAVY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, THERE ARE
COUNTRIES THERE WHICH WANT A US PRESENCE AND THE FEELING
OF SUPPORT WHICH COMES FROM IT.

3. ZURHELLEN NOTED GOOD AUSTRALIA-INDONESIA RELATIONS
IN PARTICULAR, AND PRIMARY ROLE OF AUSTRALIA IN TIMOR
SITUATION.

4. ZURHELLEN MADE NO DIRECT RESPONSE TO SNEDDEN'S STATE-
MENT THAT HE HAD DIFFICULTY RECONCILING AUSTRALIA'S
MEMBERSHIP IN ANZUS WITH WHITLAM GOVERNMENT'S SEEKING
OBSERVER STATUS AT NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AND HIS IMPLIED
HOPE THAT USG WOULD ALSO FIND LATTER UNACCEPTABLE,
BUT SAID THAT WHOLE CONCEPT OF NON-ALIGNED GROUP HAS
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BECOME TWISTED. COUNTRIES SUCH AS CUBA, CERTAINLY NOT
NON-ALIGNED, ARE MEMBERS, AND IT NOW APPEARS THAT
CONFERENCE EXPECTS TO ADMIT NORTH KOREA TO MEMBERSHIP.
IN THIS SITUATION, IT IS A DILEMMA WHETHER THIS IMPORTANT
AND LARGE GROUP OF COUNTRIES SHOULD BE LEFT WITH ONE-
SIDED PRESENTATIONS OF IMPORTANT ISSUES OR WHETHER FRBE
WORLD COUNTRIES WITH VITAL INTERESTS SHOULD ALSO SEEK
TO PRESENT THEIR POINTS OF VIEW. THIS IS PROBLEM

NOW FACED DIRECTLY BY SOUTH KOREA, WHICH WANTS TO KEEP NORTH KOREA OUT BUT WHICH IS PREPARED TO SEEK MEMBERSHIP ITSELF (ALTHOUGH IT MOST UNLIKELY TO BE ADMITTED) IN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN BALANCE. RELUCTANTLY, US IS SUPPORTING ROK IN THIS POLICY.

5. IN CONCLUSION, ZURHELLEN NOTED CONSTRUCTIVE AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPATION IN NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND COMMENTED THAT AUSTRALIA IS BECOMING SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON WORLD SCENE. KISSINGER

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